

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, September 15, 1892, with transcript

Cheers. The blazing barrels were Mr. M. McCurdy's idea., I had ordered Chinese lanterns but they did not come, fortunately for the barrels Good night With much love to you one & all. Your affectionate, Mabel. Beinn Bhreagh, Victoria County, Cape Breton, N.S. Little Narrows, Sept. 15th 92 My dear Mrs Bell,

Being on the house-boat again for the first time since the summer when you were all here with us,reminds me of you,and I wonder where you are and how you are. I only hope that you are not so hot as you were a little while ago. I wish so much that you felt able to make the journey up here, I am sure that it is only a question of believing that you can make it. It is a much more comfortable journey than it used to be, as Mamma and Papa found, and once you got here we would make you so comfortable that you would not want to go. Did you go to Whycocomagh while you were here? If you did you will remember the Little Narrows, but you will not have any idea of the beauty of this little place. It is a shy thing, and likes to be found out, not to push itself forward for every passer-by to gape at. No, you may pass this way every day of your life and never be aware that just around the corner from opposite the steamer-landing,there is the lovelies little cove,land-locked and hidden by the beautiful trees. Here Mabel of Beinn Bhreagh rests securely,however wildly the winds do blow. Just beyond where she lies,a romantic little channel leads to a lovely lake,beloved haunt of both salt and fresh-water fish and fowl. This channel is only about five yards long and varies in depth from four to eight inches,according to place or state of the tide,and it is a never-failing source of interest to shoot its rapid current,or esteer safely against its baby force,without running aground or up-setting. Elsie and I have done that last once already,but Daisy I think is already a crack pilot,and knows how to guide her little canoe with ease and grace over it r s shallows and through it's rapids. The lake,which deserves a prettier name than its very unromantic one of Narrow's Pond, is,I

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should think at least a mile long, and half as wide, and is very deep, over a hundred and fifty feet, they say. The cove where the house-boat lies is very shallow, on the contrary, and I feel perfect confidence in letting the children go out rowing, or paddling by themselves. We have had quite a company with us, there being besides ourselves Miss Sickles, and Mr Glave, a gentleman who travelled in the Congo country under Stanley's orders, although not with him. Then we have had our horses and carriages with us, and the young people have been out riding as well as sailing, and swimming. Every evening, after supper, we have got into the canoes, and paddled slowly about under the moon's beams, and over the still waters, that have been like burnished silver. One day Mr and Mrs Kennan came down in their sail-boat and anchored all night close beside us.

On Thursday, just before we came away, I had a garden-party meeting of our club, which was very successful, I think. The people came at four and all our carriages and boats were put at their disposal, so that they could go all over the grounds and waters at their pleasure. For the younger members we had lawn-tennis and croquet. At six or nearer half-past, they partook of a light supper, and then the Doctor made a speech on the Cholera, and what we should do. Afterward we divided into two parties, the older ones going on board the tug, which steamed up the bay to the head of the harbor, while the rest of us got into eight or nine boats, and rowed up the inside of the harbor to meet the tug, and pulling behind us half barrels filled with kindling-wood shavings, and other inflammable materials, liberally sprinkled with pitch and keroscene. These barrels were set on fire and burned brightly and steadily, making a most brilliant effect on the smooth water. The boats followed each other slowly, in procession, the burning lights were reflected in long wavering lines down the water. We moved down the harbour, and gathered around the tug, rowed around it, and finally clustered close, as those of our passengers who were going back to town boarded the tug — As it steamed reluctantly among the people gave us three

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Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell. Beinn Bhreagh, Victoria County, Cape Breton, M. S. Little Narrows, Sept. 15th, 92. My dear Mrs. Bell:

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Good night, with much love to you, one and all.

Your affectionate, Mabel.